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Correctional Managed Health Care Committee ensures TDCJ offenders receive timely access to quality health care services

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In 1993, the Texas Legislature established the Correctional Managed Health Care Committee (CMHCC) to address the rising costs and operational challenges involved in providing health care to offenders confined in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Currently composed of members appointed by the governor, the president of the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) at Galveston, the president of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) at Lubbock, the executive director of TDCJ, and the State Medicaid director (the latter serving as an ex officio non-voting member), the legislatively mandated mission of the CMHCC is to develop a statewide managed health care plan for the provision of health care to offenders while also controlling costs. The CMHCC establishes the Offender Health Services Plan and the corresponding health care policies and procedures that support the plan. These policies and procedures are found in the *Correctional Managed Health Care Policy Manual*.

The TDCJ is statutorily required to contract with two state university academic health sciences centers to provide offender health care services: the UTMB at Galveston and the TTUHSC at Lubbock. Both UTMB and TTUHSC have numerous subcontracts and subcontractors that assist them in delivering health services to TDCJ offenders. The CMHCC, subject to legislative limits and requirements, serves as the final authority on determination of services to be provided to the offender population. Each of the partner agencies has agreed to the assignment of various functional responsibilities. The fulfillment of individual responsibilities is assigned to the individual partner's management team and remains under the oversight of the respective executive director or university president and that partner's governing board.

In conjunction with each of the partners, the CMHCC coordinates individual and joint initiatives for cost reduction strategies. The CMHCC ensures partner representation and

direction to a number of standing and ad hoc joint committees or working groups that provide coordination of necessary services on a statewide basis. Joint committees address such issues as statewide policy development, review and approval; joint peer review activities; statewide pharmacy and therapeutics issues; and coordination of specialized clinical focus groups. The CMHCC also serves as a dispute resolution forum in the event of a disagreement relating to inmate health care services between TDCJ and the health care providers or contracting entities.

The shared communication, coordination, decision making and dispute resolution roles performed by the CMHCC are key elements to the ongoing success of the correctional health care partnership. The Board of Criminal Justice appreciates the contributions of those serving on the committee as well as the contributions of the organizations they represent. ●